

Podcast 41: 2008-9 Worksheet

League Champions

(May 22nd 2009)

Pre-Listening / Background information

- On languagecaster's main report this week, we look at three winners of European leagues. Spain, Italy and England.

A. Listening – main idea

Listen to the whole report and fill in the table with appropriate information.

	Number of Titles	Leading goal scorer	Manager's name	Players mentioned	Other Information
Barcelona		Not mentioned		Eto'o Henry	
Inter Milan				Ibrahimovic Balotelli	
Manchester United			Alex Ferguson		

B. Listening – vocabulary

Listen to the first section on Barcelona and fill in the gaps with an appropriate word.

... Spanish title without even having to kick a ball as their nearest rivals Real Madrid lost for the (a) _____ time in a row giving the Catalan side an unassailable (b) _____. This was their first La Liga in three years and was (c) _____ merited by a team that was universally regarded as the best in Spain from the (d) _____ / _____. Actually, that's not quite true as Barca began the season in poor form losing to Numancia in the first game under new manager and former midfield maestro, Pep Guardiola. Little did we know at the time that that would be one of only two small blips to their (e) _____ that has seen them lose only 4 times. They moved top of the table in week 7 and have stayed there since and that's (f) _____ an unbelievable 17 wins from 18 matches from second place Real Madrid, with at one stage a (g) **suggestion** that they might catch Barcelona. However, the Catalan side inflicted a 6-2 (h) _____ on Madrid and that was that.

C. Comprehension

Listen to the section on Inter Milan and answer the questions below.

1. What's the connection between trebles and Inter Milan?

2. What proved to be right?

3. Two reasons were given for Inter's win. What were they?
 - a)

 - b)

4. Where does the leading scorer of Inter come from?

D. Listening

Listen to the section on Manchester United and complete the sentences below.

1. Like Inter Milan, Manchester United / retain / title

2. This number puts them alongside Liverpool as the two most successful teams in English football history

3. They / already favourites / win / title again / year such is / strength / depth / squad

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ANSWERS

A. Listening – main idea

Listen to the whole report and fill in the table with appropriate information.

	Number of Titles	Leading goal scorer	Manager's name	Players mentioned	Other Information
Barcelona	19	Not mentioned	Pep Guardiola	Eto'o Henry Messi	First Title in 3 years Lost 4 times Beat Madrid 6-2 104 goals (+71 GD) CL finalists
Inter Milan	17	Ibrahimovic (22 goals)	Jose Mourinho	Ibrahimovic Balotelli	Have won 4 titles in a row Aiming for first CL win in 40 years Defensive consistency
Manchester United	18	Cristiano Ronaldo (18 goals)	Alex Ferguson	Ronaldo Rooney	CL finalists Defensively strong (clean sheets)

B. Listening – vocabulary

Listen to the first section on Barcelona and fill in the gaps with an appropriate word.

... Spanish title without even having to kick a ball as their nearest rivals Real Madrid lost for the (a) **third** time in a row giving the Catalan side an unassailable (b) **lead**. This was their first La Liga in three years and was (c) **thoroughly** merited by a team that was universally regarded as the best in Spain from the (d) **word go**. Actually, that's not quite true as Barca began the season in poor form losing to Numancia in the first game under new manager and former midfield maestro, Pep Guardiola. Little did we know at the time that that would be one of only two small blips to their (e) **season** that has seen them lose only 4 times. They moved top of the table in week 7 and have stayed there since and that's (f) **despite** an unbelievable 17 wins from 18 matches from second place Real Madrid, with

at one stage a (g) **suggestion** that they might catch Barcelona. However, the Catalan side inflicted a 6-2 (h) **thrashing** on Madrid and that was that.

C. Comprehension

Listen to the section on Inter Milan and answer the questions below.

1. What's the connection between trebles and Inter Milan?

They had won three titles before this season.

2. What proved to be right?

The fact that Inter would win with Jose Mourinho in charge

3. Two reasons were given for Inter's win. What were they?

a) Defensive consistency

b) Other teams were poor

4. Where does the leading scorer of Inter come from?

Sweden

D. Listening

Listen to the section on Manchester United and complete the sentences below.

1. Like Inter Milan, Manchester United / retain / title

Like Inter Milan, Manchester United also retained their title

2. This number puts them alongside Liverpool as the two most successful teams in English football history

This number puts them alongside Liverpool as the two most successful teams in English football history

3. They / already favourites / win / title again / year such is / strength / depth / squad

They are already favourites to win the title again next year such is the strength in depth of the squad

Transcript

Three of the big European league titles were decided last week as Inter Milan won in Italy, Barcelona in Spain and Manchester United in England. All three teams won before the season actually finished, suggesting it was relatively easy, however, they didn't completely get it their own way.

Here's a look back at how these three teams became champions of their respective domestic leagues.

Barcelona won their 19th Spanish title without even having to kick a ball as their nearest rivals Real Madrid lost for the third time in a row giving the Catalan side an unassailable lead. This was their first *La Liga* in three years and was thoroughly merited by a team that was universally regarded as the best in Spain from the word go. Actually, that's not quite true as Barca began the season in poor form losing to Numancia in the first game under new manager and former midfield maestro, Pep Guardiola. Little did we know at the time that that would be one of only two small blips to their season that has seen them lose only 4 times. They moved top of the table in week 7 and have stayed there since and that's despite an unbelievable 17 wins from 18 matches from second place Real Madrid, with at one stage a suggestion that they might catch Barcelona. However, the Catalan side inflicted a 6-2 thrashing on Madrid and that was that.

Barca have scored more goals than anyone else in Spain - 104 - with Henry, Messi and Eto'o accounting for 71 of those goals. They have also conceded fewer than any other team and have a goal difference of + 71. They have also played with a style that has left many wondering if this team is even better than the Dream Team of Cruyff. It certainly plays in a similar manner and of course, there may still be more to come as Guardiola's team play Manchester United in the Champions League final next week which could lead to an unprecedented treble for them.

Talking of trebles, Inter Milan had won the previous three Italian titles before this season started and with a new manager, in the charismatic Jose Mourinho, in charge it seemed there would be little doubt which side would be lifting the *Scudetto* title at the end of this season. And so it proved to be as the *Nerazzurri* won their 17th Italian championship with three games remaining.

They went top early in the season and like Barcelona they have been there since, thanks in part to their wonderful defensive consistency but also due to the poor performances of their rivals. Juventus, AC Milan and Roma were never in the title race and all three clubs will look to new faces - managerial and playing staff - next season.

Inter will also have fresh faces next year but one player who is staying is Zlatan Ibrahimovic, the Swedish striker, who yet again is the club's top scorer, this time with 22 goals and with the talented

Mario Balotelli alongside him, Inter's fans will be hoping for their fifth title next season along with a Champions League victory - their first in forty years.

Like Inter Milan, Manchester United also retained their title, in fact, they won the English Premier League for the third year in a row to give them a total of 18 domestic league titles. This number puts them alongside Liverpool as the two most successful teams in English football history.

Though they won the league with one game to spare, the title race was a close-run affair as their huge rivals Liverpool led for much of the early part of the season. Too many home draws for them and an amazingly consistent run of clean sheets for United after Christmas, meant that Ferguson's men moved top in January and remained there till the end. Like Inter, much of their success has been built on sound defence rather than all-out-attack but it could also be argued that they have two of the best forwards in the Premier League in Wayne Rooney and 18-goal Cristiano Ronaldo.

They are already favourites to win the title again next year such is the strength in depth of the squad but of course, before all that, they have to defend their Champions League title against Barcelona next week.